

[P. 2406] ~~WY 787~~ VS 25W
Y
787
828

dreams that his mother-in-law is there too.¹⁷⁹ When people dreamed of someone in this casual manner (i.e., not a "power" dream), they might speak of it to each other, saying, for example, "I saw your brother" (uhe'wia nu'u'bun:t, Waksachi).

W
Y
787
778
[577]
756

Significant or "power" dreams were told only to the most intimate friends, usually only to one who was also seeking t:pn1. There was no formal prohibition on disclosing them; rather it was a matter of wisdom and good taste not to talk of, and particularly not to brag of, one's supernatural power.¹⁸⁰ Other people were aware, of course, of a seeker's activities and knew that he was by way of being a doctor. A man was usually thirty to forty years old before he felt that he knew enough to cure as a professional shaman. It was often through the intimate acquaintance of two friends who knew of each other's supernatural experiences that a budding shaman secured his first patient.

Thus, a man who had a sick child might be too poor to pay a high fee or might be distrustful of established shamans. The intimate friend of the novice would suggest to the father that he let So-and-So try, that he knew he had much power. Or the father himself might be aware of the young man's efforts and want to try him. Whichever the circumstance, the father would approach the young man with a sum of money (less than would be offered a professional practitioner) and ask him to come try to cure his child. If the novice felt he had enough power to attempt it, he would do so; if not, there was no compulsion for him to agree. He would be likely to refuse unless confident of success, as failure always laid a doctor's motives open to suspicion, especially repeated failures. A young doctor, like an old one, was entitled to keep the fee whether the cure succeeded or not, and was often given additional presents of baskets or blankets, if successful.

W
Y
755
756

However, the novice must begin sometime and, if he accepted the fee, would go and do his best. His talismans would be those indicated by his dreams, and his methods of curing would be sucking, blowing, and rubbing, as with all doctors. If the patient recovered, he was recommended to others and so little by little set up a practice, so to say. He continued his training procedure, for always he must reempower his used talismans, and an accumulation of power was not only desirable but indispensable when he became sufficiently successful to attract attention as a possible rival to older shamans. An initial failure to cure usually led to redoubled efforts to seek power; but

W
Y
[606]
153

¹⁷⁹Although S.O. insisted that there was no mother-in-law tabu in his society, it is worthy of remark that he "could not remember" his mother-in-law's name in spite of the fact that his genealogical memory carried over 200 names and his dreams of the women were cordial.

¹⁸⁰A story pointing a moral against bragging of one's power appears in Gayton and Newman, 37.

182 relatively speaking. And the political institutions of Yokuts and
 614 Western Mono were perhaps as simple as any in California. Clans
 616 were lacking. The moiety, where it existed, regulated marriage and
 592 ceremonial participation. Patrilineal families dwelt together in perma-
 nent villages but owned no land other than an ill-defined tribal area.
 The household group was not large; normally its personnel included
 a married couple, their immature offspring, and a possible orphaned
 sister of either spouse, or an aged relative. A husband and father
 was head of his own household affairs but bowed to the opinion of
 elder male relatives when the entire lineage was involved. These
 families were entirely free to go about their daily pursuits of hunt-
 ing, fishing, seed gathering, basket, pottery, and tool making, seeking
 of supernatural experience, gambling, or idling, without interference
 from officials. There were none to interfere. The sense of right and
 182 wrong, of duty to one's relatives and neighbors, was instilled in
 869 children as they grew up. Truthfulness, industry, a modest opinion
 of oneself, and above all, generosity, were regarded not so much as
 positive virtues as essential qualities. Informants today condemn
 577 those who are greedy, jealous, or egotistical. It was largely upon the
 personal character of individuals that the peace of a community
 depended.

692 Legal authority over the people at large was wielded by chiefs and
 622 their henchmen, the winatums. The chief's power was expressed as
 624 a general jurisdiction having a paternal-judiciary aspect. He made
 decisions on village or tribal affairs such as holding fandangos, or
 building a new sweat-house, he settled interfamily disputes, and
 granted permission for death punishments. His judgment operated
 in place of fixed laws. The winatums were the coordinating element
 in the interrelationship of the people and their chiefs: they were the
 universal joint in the social machinery. Their official activities were
 many, as executing orders from the chief, making announcements,
 carrying private and public messages between individuals and tribes,
 directing camp organization, and managing all phases of ceremonial
 activity. The presence or absence of the minor officials, subchiefs,
 and dance managers, made little difference in the powers of chiefs
 or the freedom of citizens. In other words, the chiefs, with their win-
 atums as manipulating instruments, constituted the sole legal authority
 in the political system of south central California.

671 We have spoken of the complete lack of formulated law in Yokuts
 and Western Mono society. This is scarcely overstating the case, for

181 If he met with one or two failures he gave up his practice entirely,
 756 or at least until he had strengthened his contact with the supernatural.
 Such a man was free of suspicion. The doctor who continued to cure
 181 after losing patients was the one to be feared for he was causing illness
 754 just to make money in curing, without regard for public welfare. But
 the doctor whose avidity led him to such extremes was done away with
 on slight evidence; he had but a tenuous hold on life. Hence the men
 who were willing to risk their lives in this manner for personal
 aggrandizement were more rare than informants' accounts would lead
 [756] us to think. To sum up, shamanism as a factor in political life acted
 626] as a deterrent upon crime, was a force which preserved as well as de-
 stroyed life, and its misuse was restrained by the threat of discovery
 and subsequent death.

182 Turning to the intrigues of chiefs and shamans, it will be seen
 622 that there was some justification for the alliance. A chief who hired
 756 a shaman to sicken a rich man who did not join in the expenses of a
 fandango or mourning ceremony was setting a public example at the
 same time that he was enriching himself. To the chief and to his
 shaman, who shared the money paid in fees by the sick man, it was
 unquestionably a matter of financial profit. But from the point of
 view of the public at large it was a fair punishment. Thus: a man
 of money who neglected or refused to bear his share of a public
 • [577] expense was placing a heavier financial burden upon his fellow-
 citizens; furthermore, generosity was an ideal, and the man who
 failed to contribute his share was showing himself to be greedy, and
 hence received no sympathy if misfortune befell him. In the absence
 of any law or system of taxation, it behooved each citizen, especially
 those of wealth, to participate in the sharing of public expenses, lest
 he incur the displeasure of the chief and of the public, and sickness
 or death be visited upon him.

182 The chief, however, in his turn could not unrestrainedly make use
 622 of malevolent supernatural power. He was a public figure, and as
 such was open to censure. Though his position was acquired by in-
 heritance, his retention of it depended upon his conduct. Simple as
 was the civilization of Yokuts and Western Mono, upon the chief,
 as official executor, devolved all manner of responsibilities—and these
 were not easy. Take for example, the management of a mourning
 ceremony in which the chief's own village, other villages, and even
 other tribes were involved. The financial resources of all persons
 concerned had to be determined, and the intertribal exchange of